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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR DECEMBER 27, 2004

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for December 27, 2004. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

#### POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

ZAMAN / YENI SAFAK / RADIKAL / HURRIYET / SABAH: A group with 1000 members, comprising of Turkish soldiers and NGOs, commemorated the 90th anniversary of a tragic event of 1914 when 90,000 Turkish soldiers died due to freezing weather conditions, as they were fighting the Battle of Sarikamis against Russia at Sarikamis, Kars. The group Allahuekber Mountains to visit the scene of the battle.

CUMHURIYET / OZGUR GUNDEM: 2000 people demonstrated against the killing of Ugur Kaymaz in Kiziltepe, Mardin and people carried slippers in their hands in symbolic of the slippers that Ugur Kaymaz and Ahmet Kaymaz were wearing when they were killed. The protesters demanded that Abdulkadir Aksu, Minister of Internal Affairs, resign from his office.

OZGUR GUNDEM: 'The Turkish troops that were tied to Bolu Commando Brigade -known as Brigade of Horror among people- (allegedly) carried out a massacre and extra judicial killings that killed 7 civilians in Yolcati township of Lice, Diyarbakir in May 15, 1994' said Suleyman Yildirim, a witness of the alleged massacre, in a statement given to Lice Prosecutor. Yildirim survived because he was separated from those killed, because the soldiers (allegedly) ordered the killing of people less than 65 years of age. In February 17, 2004, the European Court of Human Rights penalized Turkey to pay 71,530 euros to compensate for the material and immaterial losses of the victims.

MILLIYET: Kabatas High School and Kabatas Education Foundation has renovated a village school in Omerli, Mardin, which was demolished by PKK. The foundation has also donated educational tools to the school and provided for the material and goods that the students are in need of personally. Contemporary school standards have now been attained by the efforts undertaken.

YENI SAFAK: The existence of a high-voltage transmission line on two electric towers in a primary school named Sanliurfa Kanuni Sultan Suleyman Primary School at Sanliurfa poses great threat to the lives of 5300 students being educated there.

OZGUR GUNDEM: On the birthday of Jesus, December 25, Suryanis held a meeting called 'Dialogue and Tolerance Between Religions' in Diyarbakir. Christians and Muslims together delivered messages on peace at the meetings. During the religious ceremonies, people prayed for accession of Turkey to the EU.

OZGUR GUNDEM: 7 people set up a 'Peace Tent' on September 1 World Peace Day in Semdinli, Hakkari. Three months later, Semdinli Prosecutor decided to conduct an investigation against the 'Peace Tent' activists because of the speeches and slogans uttered during the event.

EVRENSEL: Due to insufficient electricity infrastructure, people in Diyarbakir are seriously suffering from power failure and low voltage problems. Tarik Ozden, Chairperson of Diyarbakir Branch of the Chamber of Electrical Engineers, says, because TEDAS (Turkish Electricity Joint Stock Company) is neglecting the renewal of electricity infrastructure and scarce budget is allocated for the projects, and since people are using electricity for heating their houses, Diyarbakir is experiencing such electricity problems.

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

11. OZGUR GUNDEM: According to the report of the Turkish Agriculturalists Association, despite the fact that East Anatolia has been a center for cattle breeding because of the favorable ecological conditions of the region, implementation of wrong state policies has seriously hampered the development of cattle breeding since 1980.

12. TURKIYE: Hilmi Guler, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, said that six billion dollars have been spent for the dams in the scope of GAP project until today. GAP project comprises of Firat and Dicle basins. On Firat basin, a total of fourteen dams, eleven of which are hydroelectric power plants, will generate 2098 GWh energy annually. A total of eight

hydroelectric power plants on Dicle basin however will generate 7247 GWh energy annually.

**13.** BOLGE: According to the joint press announcement of Nejat Kocer, Executive Board President of the Gaziantep Chamber of Industry, and Mehmet Aslan, Executive Board President of the Gaziantep Chamber of Commerce, their visit with President Erdogan to Syria and interviews made with Syrian government will bring beneficial outcomes for the economy of Gaziantep and the decisions made there will render Gaziantep a center for trade.

**14.** BOLGE / VAKIT: Because of the high amount of harvests, the prices of vegetables and fruits have decreased on the markets in Adana.

**15.** YENI SAFAK: A 400 kV power plant that costs ten trillion TL (7,2 million US dollars) is installed to provide for the energy needs of the region between Batman, Mardin and Kiziltepe.

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